

Professor Keldysh,

My name is Christian Anfinsen and I am a biochemist working at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. I am a member of this Academy, but I would like to emphasize strongly that I do not speak for the Academy. My remarks are made as an individual scientist and as spokesman for a large number of scientists in the United States who feel concern over certain recent actions by your government that could jeopardize the cordial relations now developing between scientists in our respective countries.

We are further concerned, as human beings, that these actions violate the spirit of the U.N. Declaration on Human Rights. We understand, of course, that you may not be in a position to speak for your government but would nevertheless like to ask you the following questions as a representative of the Soviet Academy of Sciences and as a fellow scientist.

1. Why have some scientists been refused exit visas when such is their right under the constitution of your country?
2. If these scientists were so essential in their jobs, why have so many been fired or demoted, and prohibited from attending scientific meetings even in the USSR?
3. Why have such unrealistic and exorbitant prices been placed on exit visas?
4. Does the Soviet Academy of Sciences plan any action toward a solution of these questions?

I should mention to the membership present here that a copy of my remarks was given to Professor Keldysh so that he could consider these questions at leisure and without any feelings of pressure or surprise. We would be grateful if he could give us some understanding of the situation and perhaps some indication of policy changes in the future.